

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 INR-10 L-03 ACDA-12  
NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 SP-02 ICA-11 TRSE-00 H-01  
NSC-05 /078 W  
-----055249 022024Z /64

R 021851Z MAY 78  
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4792  
INFO SECDEF WASHDC  
JCS WASHDC  
USMISSION USNATO  
USNMR SHAPE  
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER  
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN GER  
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG  
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER  
USDOCSOUTH NAPLES IT  
CINCLANT NORFOLK VA  
AMEMBASSY ANKARA  
AMEMBASSY ATHENS  
AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS  
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN  
AMEMBASSY LISBON  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG  
AMEMBASSY OSLO  
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK  
AMEMBASSY ROME  
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

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E.O. 11652: GDS  
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TAGS: MARR, NATO, OREP, SP  
SUBJECT: SPAIN AND NATO: TALKS WITH SPANISH POLITICAL  
LEADERS

1. SUMMARY: THE VISIT OF CODEL BURTON MAY 27-31  
PROVIDED A USEFUL OPPORTUNITY TO TEST AGAIN THE CONDITION  
OF SENIOR SPANISH POLITICAL THINKING ON THE ISSUE OF

SPANISH ENTRY IN NATO. HIGHLIGHTS WERE A SLIGHT FURTHER REFINEMENT OF SOCIALIST (PSOE) THINKING AND UNCERTAINTY REGARDING THE INTENTION SUGGESTED EARLIER BY THE GOS TO LAUNCH A PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE IN THE FALL, SOON AFTER THE CONSTITUTIONAL REFERENDUM. END SUMMARY.

2. CODEL BURTON (CONGRESSMEN BURTON, WILSON, CLAWSON, GARCIA, AND CORRADA) DISCUSSED THE POSSIBILITY OF SPANISH ENTRY IN NATO WITH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS (FIRST VICE PRESIDENT AND DEFENSE MINISTER GUTIERREZ MELLADO; UNDER SECRETARY SOLANO AND DIRECTOR GENERAL DURAN AT THE MFA; THE PSOE'S GONZALEZ, MUGICA, AND YANEZ; AND THE UCD'S ARIAS SALGADO, AMONG OTHERS. IN ALL CASES THEY UNDERLINED THAT THEIR INTEREST IN DIALOGUE SHOULD NOT BE INTERPRETED AS PRESSURE TO MAKE A DECISION.

3. GOVERNMENT VIEWS: GUTIERREZ MELLADO STATED THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S PRESENT FOCUS IS ON THE CONSTITUTION AND THEN MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS. ENTRY IN NATO WOULD ONLY BE DEALT WITH LATER; THE TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION WOULD COME DUE FOR RENEWAL OF NEGOTIATIONS ABOUT A YEAR BEFORE ITS EXPIRATION. HE WAS NOT ASKED THE SUBSTANCE OF THE GOS POSITION ON NATO AND DID NOT VOLUNTEER IT. UNDER SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS SOLANO PUT IT THAT THE MATTER WAS "BOTH CLEAR AND COMPLEX". THE GOVERNING PARTY (UCD) WAS COMPLETELY IN FAVOR, AS WERE SOME OTHERS IN PARLIAMENT. CONFIDENTIAL

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THE "ESTABLISHMENT" AND THE ARMED FORCES WERE ALSO IN FAVOR. THE SOCIALISTS AND THE COMMUNISTS WERE THE PRINCIPAL FORCES OPPOSED. PEOPLE IN THE KNOW ESTIMATED THAT A PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE WOULD PRODUCE A VOTE IN FAVOR OF 210 OUT OF 350 IN THE KEY LOWER HOUSE, WELL OVER THE REQUIRED SIMPLE MAJORITY. THIS OF COURSE COULD NOT BE GUARANTEED. THE OFFICIAL GOS POSITION WAS THAT THERE WOULD BE NO DECISION UNTIL AFTER THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE. THAT DEBATE WOULD NOT OCCUR UNTIL AFTER THE CONSTITUTIONAL REFERENDUM, WHICH MIGHT TAKE PLACE SOMETIME BETWEEN MID-OCTOBER AND EARLY NOVEMBER.

4. DURAN ADDED TO THIS LATER THAT THERE WAS NO REAL CERTAINTY THE NATO DEBATE WOULD OCCUR IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE CONSTITUTIONAL REFERENDUM; IT MIGHT WELL BE LATER. WHILE HE DID NOT THINK THE GOVERNMENT WOULD RESORT TO A REFERENDUM ON NATO, IT WOULD NOT WISH DURING A TRANSITION PERIOD TO IMPOSE ITS VIEW VIA A SMALL MAJORITY IN PARLIAMENT. ON THIS SCORE HE WAS SOMEWHAT ENCOURAGED BY THE FACT THAT THE ISSUE HAD BY NOW BEEN RATHER WELL EXPOSED TO PUBLIC VIEW WITHOUT THERE HAVING OCCURRED ANY STRONG OUTCRY OF OPPOSITION. THE EVENTUAL PARLIAMENTARY

DEBATE SHOULD FOCUS NOT SIMPLY ON NATO BUT RATHER ON THE LARGER QUESTION OF SPAIN'S SECURITY REQUIREMENTS, ADDRESSING ALL THE ALTERNATIVES, AND COMING TO GRIPS WITH SPAIN'S OWN SECURITY PROBLEMS TO ITS SOUTH AND THE GENUINE POPULARITY IN SPAIN OF NEUTRALITY. ASKED ABOUT THE IMPACT OF JOINING NATO ON THE TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION, DURAN SUGGESTED THAT THE TREATY MIGHT BE GIVEN A SOMEWHAT LESS MILITARY FLAVOR, ALTHOUGH SOME FORM OF BILATERAL MILITARY AGREEMENT WOULD CERTAINLY NOT BE INCONSISTENT WITH NATO PRACTICE.

5. THE OPPOSITION (PSOE): AT EACH STEP OF THE WAY, THE

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CODEL ENCOURAGED ITS INTERLOCUTORS TO BROADEN SPANISH  
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PARTICIPATION IN THE NAA, POINTING OUT THIS OBLIGATED ONE  
TO NOTHING BUT DIALOGUE. (CONGRESSMAN WILSON WENT FURTHER  
AND SUGGESTED THE POSSIBILITY BE CONSIDERED OF SOME FORM  
OF NAA ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP AS A STEPPING STONE FOR SPAIN  
TO NATO MEMBERSHIP.) THEY STRUCK A VEIN OF GOLD WHEN  
PSOE SECGEN FELIPE GONZALEZ RESPONDED THAT SOMEONE FROM THE  
PSOE WOULD GO TO LISBON FOR THE NAA PLENARY IN NOVEMBER,  
ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT SPECIFY IN WHAT CAPACITY.

6. YANEZ (PSOE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY) POINTED TO HIS OWN  
RECENT PUBLIC DENIAL OF A NEWSPAPER SUGGESTION THAT PSOE  
VIEWS ON NATO WERE CHANGING. THERE HAD BEEN NO CHANGE.  
BUT THE PARTY DID SEEK INFORMATION, AND GONZALEZ HAD  
SPECIFICALLY ASKED HIM TO SAY TO THE CODEL THAT THE PSOE  
CONSIDERS ITSELF A WESTERN EUROPEAN AND NOT A THIRD WORLD  
PARTY. IT IS NOT ANTI-NATO, ONLY AGAINST SPAIN'S JOINING.  
HE AND MUGICA (CHAIRMAN OF THE DEFENSE COMMITTEE OF THE  
CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES) ARGUED THAT  
-- SPAIN IS NOT NEEDED ON THE CENTRAL FRONT; THE DETERRENT  
THERE IS SUFFICIENT;

-- SPAIN'S DEFENSE LINE RUNS FROM THE BALEARICS THROUGH  
THE STRAIT OF GIBRALTAR TO THE CANARIES; NATO WOULD NOT  
HELP THERE, IN FACT MIGHT HINDER WITH RESPECT TO THE  
CANARIES, WHERE THE PROBLEM IS NOT MILITARY BUT  
POLITICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL;

IN ANY EVENT, MUGICA CONTINUED, SPAIN HAS ADEQUATE  
FORCES TO DEFEND THIS LINE;

-- THE NATO ISSUE IS POLITICALLY DIVISIVE IN SPAIN AND  
PRESSING IT COULD INTERFERE WITH THE CONSOLIDATION OF  
DEMOCRACY; IT SHOULD NOT BE DEALT WITH BEFORE THE NEXT  
GENERAL ELECTIONS AND PREFERABLY NOT BEFORE 1980;  
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-- JOINING WOULD IMPOSE AN ECONOMIC BURDEN AT A TIME WHEN  
THIS TOO COULD BE PREJUDICIAL TO THE DEMOCRATIC

PROCESS.

TO THIS THEY ADDED THAT IT WOULD BE UNWISE OF THE GOS TO SEEK ENTRY INTO NATO ON THE BASIS OF A NARROW MARGIN IN PARLIAMENT. (NEITHER YANEZ NOR MUGICA MENTIONED A POPULAR REFERENDUM ON THIS OCCASION.) ASKED WHAT THE PSOE WOULD DO IF THE GOVERNMENT WON BY A SMALL MAJORITY IN PARLIAMENT, THEY SAID THE PSOE WOULD ACCEPT THE DECISION.

- ASKED THEN IF

THEY THOUGHT THIS WOULD AFFECT THE PSOE'S CHANCES IN ENSUING GENERAL ELECTIONS, MUGICA RESPONDED IN THE NEGATIVE, SAYING THAT THE PARTY'S CHANCES DEPEND ON INTERNAL, NOT FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES, AND THAT THE SPANISH VOTER WOULD NOT BE AFFECTED BY INTERNATIONAL CONCERNS.

7. THE UCD: WHEREAS SOLANO SAID THE UCD WAS SOLIDLY FOR JOINING NATO, YANEZ CLAIMED THAT UCD LEADERS WERE TELLING THE PSOE THERE WOULD BE NO DEBATE ON NATO IN THIS CORTES. (DURING THE NAA MEETINGS IN BRUSSELS, IGNACIO CAMUNAS, UCD OBSERVER THERE AND PRESIDENT OF THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES, REPORTEDLY TOLD A SPANISH JOURNALIST "THERE IS NO HURRY AND NO TIMETABLE" FOR THE QUESTION OF SPANISH ENTRY. HE HAD ALSO SAID AS MUCH EARLIER IN MADRID. HOWEVER, OTHER UCD LEADERS, SUCH AS INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY JAVIER RUPEREZ, HAVE INTIMATED TO US THAT A NATO DEBATE WOULD FOLLOW APPROVAL OF THE CONSTITUTION.)

8. UCD COORDINATOR AND ORGANIZATION SECRETARY ARIAS-

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R 021851Z MAY 78  
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4794  
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SALGADO TOLD THE CODEL THAT THE MOST URGENT BUSINESS FACING  
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THE CORTES AFTER THE CONSTITUTION (AND AFTER, HE HINTED STRONGLY, EARLY GENERAL ELECTIONS--SEPT-92) WOULD BE THE LEGISLATION OF MEANINGFUL AUTONOMY FOR SPAIN'S REGIONS, INCLUDING CATALONIA AND THE BASQUE COUNTRY. AFTER THAT, HE SAID, SPAIN WOULD BE ABLE TO BEGIN THE PROCESS LEADING TOWARD (HE HOPED) SPAIN'S INTEGRATION INTO NATO. REGARDING SPANISH PUBLIC OPINION ON NATO MEMBERSHIP, ARIAS-SALGADO CITED A POLL SHOWING SOME 55 IN FAVOR, AND HE BELIEVED MOST OR EVEN ALL OF THE UCD CONSTITUENCY SUPPORTED SPANISH MEMBERSHIP. HE (LIKE MUGICA) CONSIDERED THE NATO QUESTION ESSENTIALLY NEUTRAL IN ITS IMPACT ON INDIVIDUAL PARTY ELECTORAL FORTUNES, SINCE THE SPANISH ELECTORATE FOCUSES ALMOST ENTIRELY ON DOMESTIC ISSUES.

9. IF SPAIN WERE TO JOIN NATO, ARIAS-SALGADO THOUGHT, ONE ALTERATION IN THE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP WOULD BE THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE U.S. MILITARY FACILITIES IN SPAIN INTO NATO FACILITIES. IF SPAIN DID NOT JOIN, IN HIS VIEW THE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP SHOULD CONTINUE, WITH REVISIONS TO PROVIDE THE NECESSARY IMPROVEMENT IN WHAT SPAIN DERIVED FROM IT.

10. COMMENT: THERE WILL CONTINUE TO BE A GREAT DEAL OF UNCERTAINTY ABOUT THE TIMING OF THE SPANISH PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON NATO. WHILE EC AND NATO MEMBERSHIP ARE THE MAIN

FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES FACING THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT, THEY  
AND OTHER FOREIGN POLICY MATTERS ARE LIKELY TO TAKE SECOND  
PLACE TO DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS, AT LEAST IN THE  
COMING SIX MONTHS.

11. THIS MESSAGE WAS DRAFTED AFTER THE DEPARTURE OF  
CODEL BURTON AND HAS NOT BEEN SEEN BY CODEL BURTON MEMBERS.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Draft Date:** 02 may 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
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**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
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**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
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**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
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**TAGS:** MARR, OREP, SP, US, NATO  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014